

Chinese Internet Celebrity Transformation Mechanisms and Evolution Process

Yaqi Liang

Department of Literature and Journalism and Communications, Sichuan University,
610207 Cheng du, China
2021321030060@stu.scu.edu.cn

Shang Wei Cai

Department of Literature and Journalism and Communications, Sichuan University,
610207 Cheng du, China
2021321030060@stu.scu.edu.cn

Abstract: The internet-celebrity phenomenon, a quintessential manifestation of China's digital transformation, exemplifies individual social mobility while exercising profound economic and social influence. Grounded in Castells' theory of the network society and adopting a techno-social co-constructivist framework, this study employs historical-comparative analysis to decode its ontological essence, generative mechanisms, and axiological implications. Structurally, social media infrastructure and user demographic configurations serve as constitutive determinants, shaping the phenomenon's expressive modalities, identity formations, and value orientations. Its sociocultural ramifications materialize through three interlocking mechanisms: the aggregative dynamics of virtual space, the relational paradigms of online communities, and capital-driven market forces. The transition from cultural symbolism to economic instrumentality marks a paradigmatic shift within the digital value chain, crystallizing as the internet-celebrity economic model. Philosophically, this evolutionary trajectory invites critical engagement with fundamental tenets of value theory. It necessitates inquiry into the commodification of cultural value, whereby intangible social expressions are subsumed under market logics. The phenomenon also instantiates the dialectic between technological determinism and human agency: while digital platforms facilitate novel forms of value creation, they concurrently redefine the epistemological parameters of value judgment. By illuminating the intersection of individual aspirations and collective value norms, this study contributes to discourses on value pluralism, ethical governance in digital societies, and the philosophical foundations of contemporary social transformation. Philosophically, this reveals a crisis of value nihilism in digital capitalism, where market logic subordinates authentic human expression to instrumental metrics, echoing Adorno's critique of the culture industry.

Keywords: Internet Celebrity; Internet Celebrity Economy; Empirical Characteristics; Logical Mechanisms; Socioeconomic Consequences

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and Significance

In the digital media era, the social space available to citizens has been

significantly expanded. This is mainly reflected in the diversification of content-production spaces and the rich variety of platform-content outputs. Technological advancements in social software, along with the new consumption patterns driven by online shopping, have brought about major changes in the brand image and marketing environment. Currently, consumers' real experiences are more important than corporate brand promotion activities and have become the core of brand-image building (Vargo & Lusch, 2014). "Internet celebrities", as "online opinion leaders" among consumers, shape their virtual online images. By taking advantage of the real-time interactivity inherent on the Internet, Internet celebrities effectively utilize consumers' fragmented time (Castells, 2004). They skillfully design content-based marketing and emotional-marketing methods and flexibly guide fans' consumption decisions and value recognition, thus giving rise to a new economic model centered around fans. The online fan culture, actively cultivated by grassroots Internet celebrities, has led to the evolution of many subcultures into a typical way for netizens to express and release social emotions (Van Dijck et al., 2018). This, in turn, provides a necessary psychological foundation for the prevalence of the Internet - celebrity phenomenon. Data from the 55th Statistical Report on China's Internet Development shows that by December 2024, China's netizen population reached 1.108 billion, with an internet penetration rate of 78.6%. E-commerce users numbered 974 million, constituting 87.9% of the total user base. The China Online Audio-Visual Development Research Report (2025) further indicates that live-streaming users amounted to 833 million (75.2% of netizens), underscoring the proliferation of interactive digital consumption. Sustainable consumption in the influencer economy and social media's social responsibility necessitate unpacking how these domains co-construct a new shopping paradigm for the digital age (Ni, 2024). This process engenders a highly interactive consumer ethos, marked by contests over content-production authority and audience-powered online consumption carnivals. The resulting landscape is a tripartite co-construction among economic capital, individual influencers, and internet platforms, all oriented towards commercial interests. For fans, internet celebrities function as axiological symbols and emotional anchors. As their symbolic-value attributes are amplified within virtual consumption scenarios, with real-time communication and emotional gratification needs being substantially met. This dynamic not only incites consumption but also truncates fans' rational consumption deliberation time, effectively stimulating purchasing behavior (Williams, 2003). The phenomenon thus exemplifies the socio-axiological dynamics of digital capitalism, where emotional labor and symbolic value

creation reshape consumer subjectivity and market ethics. In terms of cultural and psychological factors, we believe that technology does not spontaneously emerge and exert an influence on society. On the contrary, the social situation and social demands are the decisive forces in shaping technology (Mansell & Silverstone, 1996). Therefore, it is necessary to view the communication characteristics of the "internet-celebrity economy" with a dialectical and prudent attitude and to establish a new path for its long-term development to ensure its healthiness, standardization, and orderly progress.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND RESEARCH APPROACH

2.1 Research Status at Home and Abroad

Internet celebrities represent a quintessential product of China's internet development. A review of the scholarly corpus indicates that research on this phenomenon predominantly emerged in 2016, marking the inaugural year of its mainstream ascendancy. Coined as one of the top ten buzzwords of 2015 by "*Yaowen Jiaozhi*", the term "internet celebrity"—shortened from "internet-popular figures"—denotes individuals who have attained visibility and garnered netizen adulation. While the lexicon has gained currency recently, the phenomenon of online fame has been coterminous with successive phases of China's internet evolution. Consequently, extant studies have primarily focused on descriptive analyses of the internet-celebrity phenomenon through the lens of mediated communication paradigms. This approach, however, necessitates integration with axiological frameworks to unpack its deeper socio-cultural implications. Adorno's critique of the culture industry illuminates how the internet celebrity economy reduces human values to exchangeable commodities. in this system: Internet celebrities (influencers) produce homogenized content tailored to algorithmic preferences, transforming authentic human aspirations into marketable "lifestyles." (Adorno & Horkheimer, 2019). Habermas' distinction between instrumental rationality and communicative rationality exposes ethical decay in internet celebrity dynamics: Relationships as Market Transactions. Influencer-audience interactions are structured by instrumental goals. This mirrors Habermas' concern that capitalism colonizes the "lifeworld"—the sphere of social interaction—with economic imperatives. For example, "influencer friendships" often serve as marketing collaborations, while emotional appeals in content (e.g., sob stories) become tools for manipulating consumer loyalty (Habermas, 1985). As Castell's theory of the network

society suggests, such phenomena are not mere cultural artifacts but active participants in reconstructing social value systems—an avenue of inquiry that current research has yet to fully explore. Drawing on the developmental stages of internet technology, extant research posits that China's online fame phenomenon has evolved through three distinct epochs: the text-based era, the image-based era, and the video-live-streaming era—each separated by an average interval of seven years. Pronounced disparities exist in fame acquisition modalities and group characteristics across these periods: cyber-literary influencers dominated the text-based era; parody and unconventionality prevailed in the image-based era; while the video-live-streaming era has witnessed diversified identity configurations and fame pathways, marking the professionalization and industrialization of internet celebrities (Imad et al., 2021). By 2024, over a decade of scholarships have transitioned from initial inquiries into the internet-celebrity phenomenon, live-streaming practices, and the influencer economy to contemporary investigations of its axiological implications (Peng & Su, 2024). Concurrently, elucidating the motivational mechanisms behind online fame has emerged as another research pivot, with existing studies primarily approaching the topic from three theoretical vantage points:

2.1.1 A Micro - Perspective

This analysis focuses on deconstructing the constitutive factors of online fame, including internet celebrities' individual dispositional traits, axiological drivers, and performative modalities. It is posited that online figures seek attention and popularity through corporeal symbolism consumption, discourse-driven sensationalism, and strategic fan engagement. Scholarly inquiry identifies competencies, physical attributes, temperamental traits, biographical narratives, and speculative dispositions as pivotal individual determinants of online visibility (Wang, 2016).

2.1.2 A Meso – Perspective

Emphasis is placed on the influence of factors such as Internet technology, business entities, and fan communities. It is contended that the continuous iterative advancement of Internet technology serves as a fundamental technological prerequisite for the sustained popularity of the internet - celebrity phenomenon (Su et al., 2019). Internet marketers, internet - celebrity incubation firms, and venture capital are the driving forces behind the professionalization and marketization of internet

celebrities, resulting in a significant upsurge in their market value and influence; Internet celebrities establish and manage exclusive fan communities through online and offline communication, interaction, and team management to steadily enhance their popularity.

2.1.3 A Macro – Perspective

Explanations for the phenomenon of achieving online fame are mainly derived from aspects such as social - structure transformation, the advent of consumer society, and internet - popular culture. It is argued that practical issues such as the wealth - gap and inter - generational mobility pressures during the social - transformation process constitute significant background factors contributing to grassroots netizens' eagerness to achieve online fame. Elaborates comprehensively on China's celebrity industry from five dimensions: policy and governance, platforms, creators, culture, and globalization, and distills an "internet - celebrity" model with indigenous characteristics that diverges from the Western "Social Media Entertainment" model. This divergence necessitates critical engagement with Taylor's theory of 'strong evaluation' (1989), as Chinese influencers navigate a tension between market-driven 'digital personae' and Confucian ethics of authenticity—a paradox absent in Western SME's fragmented 'performative selves'."

Research on the communication characteristics, mechanisms, and effects of short videos featuring "elderly internet celebrities" posits that discovering and cultivating more knowledge - based "elderly internet celebrities" and leveraging "silver - haired internet celebrities" to drive the silver economy may offer viable solutions. Research on the communication practices of "rural internet celebrities" demonstrates that such practices have expedited the "localization" shift in rural social communication.

While extant literature has characterized the online fame phenomenon and explored its causal mechanisms from multifarious angles, theoretically, these inquiries can be subsumed under two paradigmatic orientations: technological determinism and social constructivism. The technological determinism paradigm—rooted in the technological logic of China's internet evolution—examines the empirical instantiations, periodic characteristics, and generative mechanisms of online fame, foregrounding the mediating role of media-technological dimensions. A systematic comparison between China's influencer model and the Western Social Media Entertainment (SME) paradigm warrants critical inquiry, particularly through the lens of philosophical critiques on value systems, identity, and morality. The essence of SME as a radical cultural-value experiment

contrasts with China's model—emerging as a "parallel universe" in the SME exploration—owing to its distinct axiological configurations. This divergence, framed within the "global-local" value tension, invites analysis via Ogburn's billiard-ball model (Ogburn & Duncan, 1964) and subsequent techno-social theories, while intersecting with Adorno's, Habermas', and Taylor's philosophical frameworks. The Chicago School's techno-determinist paradigm, echoed in Toffler and Bell's narratives, posits ICT as the architect of social structure—an approach that Adorno's cultural industry theory deconstructs. In SME, algorithmic logic reduces cultural value to quantifiable metrics (e.g., likes, conversion rates), homogenizing aesthetics through capital-driven standardization and alienating symbolic value from authentic expression (Adorno & Horkheimer, 2019). By contrast, China's model, shaped by social constructivism (Williams, 2003), reveals how socio-cultural praxis molds technology differently: here, influencer-fan interactions exemplify Habermas' concern over instrumentalized communication, where strategic behavior" (profit-driven engagement) supplants "communicative rationality" (sincere dialogue), eroding interpersonal morality (Habermas, 1985). Charles Taylor's critique of modern identity further illuminates cross-cultural disparities: Western influencers often embody fragmented "performative selves" divorced from Taylor's "strong evaluation" moral framework, while Chinese influencers navigate a distinct authenticity crisis—their "digital personae" reflecting local market demands rather than universal existential quests (Taylor, 1989). This comparative analysis, anchored in both sociological paradigms and philosophical ethics, uncovers how techno-determinism and social constructivism each enable the influencer economy to distort value systems: the former through cultural industrialization, the latter through context-specific normative erosion. We contend that although the two research orientations represent classic paradigms for discussing the relationship between media technology and social change, their theoretical presuppositions both accentuate the dominant role of a single factor, rendering them insufficient to comprehensively explain the emergence of the internet-celebrity phenomenon in China and its attendant economic and social consequences.

2.2 The Mutual Construction of Information Technology and Social Change: A Theoretical Perspective Based on the "Network Society"

In response to the problems existing in the two classic paradigms of the existing discussions on the relationship between information technology and social change, the academic community has proposed a new research

orientation as an alternative theory, namely the technology - society mutual - constitution theory (Barley, 1986) explicitly pointed out. This mutual-constitution framework intersects with axiological debates by demonstrating how digital technology redefines 'value' itself—for instance, converting emotional labor into quantifiable market value, a process that challenges Aristotle's distinction between 'use value' and 'exchange value'. " That the development and popularization of modern communication media, especially television and the Internet, have enabled people's daily leisure to enter an individualistic mode, resulting in a decline in social capital and public participation in the United States, and thus weakening the social foundation of the American democratic system. In response to Putnam's view, sociologists such as Wellman carried out more detailed research to reply (MacKenzie & Wajcman, 1999). Wellman and others believed that the Internet has not significantly changed people's original social - relationship structure but has only provided an alternative way for interpersonal communication in addition to face - to - face interaction and telephone communication (Rainie & Wellman, 2012). Although the Internet has led to a decline in relationships in real - neighborhood communities, it has increased people's online and offline public participation. The manifestation form of social capital in the Internet era no longer relies on the traditional family - centered interpersonal communication but on the individual - centered networked communication. Networked individualism has become a structural trend in modern Western societies. Similarly, Richard Ling's research on the impact of mobile - phone use on social change in the West found that when the use of mobile - network technology (mobile phones) becomes a part of daily social life, it will have a social function of ritual existence (media ritual) to strengthen the existing interpersonal relationships within families and peer groups. And by means of the ritualized daily presentation, it can find a new integration mechanism for enhancing the cohesion of modern society. The characteristics of interpersonal relationships in Western societies have not been atomized or isolated with the application of modern technology (Ling, 2004).

2.3 The Research Approach of this Paper

"Adopting a critical constructivist stance, this study views the internet - celebrity phenomenon as a site where techno - social co - construction reproduces hegemonic value systems, aligning with Mansell and Silverstone's (Mansell & Silverstone, 1996) critique of technology's political

economy." When studying the phenomenon of internet celebrities, it is necessary to break through the constraints of traditional theories. One should not merely focus on the network media and the groups of internet celebrities but rather place emphasis on exploring the mutual - shaping process between the Internet and Chinese society. The uniqueness of the internet - celebrity phenomenon in China does not stem from the absolute superiority of network technology nor is it simply due to the benefits brought about by the population size and consumption capacity. The key lies in the interaction between network technology and society, which has led to changes in the organizational forms and operation mechanisms of the economic society. Although internet celebrities have attracted widespread attention in recent years, they have been present in various stages of the development of the Internet. Their nature and content are complex and cannot be simply classified according to the heat of news; instead, categorization should be based on the social application of media technology and its mutual-construction characteristics. Using a historical-comparative method, this paper divides the phenomenon of online popularity into three stages corresponding to the evolution of network-media technology: the portal-website era (dominated by BBS and online forums), the PC-social-media era (characterized by blogs and microblogs), and the mobile-social-media era (marked by WeChat, apps, and live streaming). For each stage, an in-depth analysis is conducted from three dimensions—the technical environment, the demographic structure of netizens, and the mutual-construction dynamics between the Internet and society—to explore the mechanisms of gaining online fame, process characteristics, internal logic, and the manifestation and transformation of the online popularity phenomenon and influencer economy. This analysis reveals both aligns with and conflicts with axiological theories: on one hand, it aligns with Adorno's critique of cultural commodification and Habermas' theory of communicative action by showing how technology shapes social values and provides platforms for value negotiation; on the other hand, it conflicts with traditional axiology by potentially subordinating intrinsic value to instrumental rationality and risking moral relativism. Moreover, digitally mediated fame challenges traditional philosophical concepts of identity and authenticity: it fragments the essentialist self into algorithmic avatars, as critiqued by Foucault, and replaces ontological authenticity with data-driven simulacra, echoing Baudrillard's theory. By comparing these stages, a unified theoretical interpretation is proposed, integrating insights from co-construction

theory and axiology to understand how techno-social interactions redefine meaning, value, identity, and authenticity in the digital age. The internet celebrity phenomenon demands a rigorous axiological critique to unravel the complex mechanisms through which values are privileged, marginalized, or commodified within its digital ecosystem. At its core, influencer culture instantiates a hierarchy where instrumental values—such as traffic metrics (quantified via likes, shares, and conversion rates) and performative individualism maintain hegemonic status, while traditional Confucian ethical tenets, collective moral imperatives, and non-commercialized forms of expression are systematically marginalized. This process of value reordering aligns with Adorno's critique of the culture industry, wherein the primacy of exchange value subordinates authentic cultural production to the dictates of capital, as seen in the commodification of corporeality, emotional labor, and cultural identities as marketable signifiers. In Confucian cultural contexts, the phenomenon presents a dialectical tension: while some creators attempt to synthesize traditional virtues like filial piety with digital content, thereby fostering a form of value pluralism, this axiological analysis reveals a dual crisis of value colonialism (where global capitalist logics subsume local ethical systems) and nihilistic pluralism (where nominal value diversity conceals a homogenizing market rationality). To address this, a reconstructive ethics is called for, one that integrates Confucian doctrine of the mean) with Habermas, a communicative rationality to restore the primacy of sincerity and intersubjective understanding in digital cultural production, thereby resisting the instrumentalization of human experience that defines the influencer economy.

3. THE PORTAL WEBSITE ERA (1995 - 2004) OF BECOMING POPULAR ONLINE

When China gained official access to the Internet in 1994, online media initiated a process of techno-social integration that demands analysis through the lens of cultural capital theory and heterotopic space critique. Peng (Peng, 2004) notes that the Internet first took root in universities and research institutions, spaces historically endowed with Bourdieu's cultural capital theoretical framework essential for understanding how digital technology was initially appropriated as a tool of epistemic distinction.



Figure 1: The Interface of the BBS Forum

3.1 Social Media and Characteristics of User Structure in the Portal Website Era

In 1995, Bulletin Board System (BBS) websites were first introduced within renowned institutions like Peking University and Tsinghua University. Leveraging the technological frameworks of their European and American counterparts, these platforms rapidly gained substantial popularity within domestic academic circles, principally attributable to their multifarious online - social functions. Functioning as topic - centered, square - structured communication ecosystems, BBS platforms employed text - and - image - based information - dissemination models. Nevertheless, BBS was restricted to teachers and students within the campus, failing to meet the requirements of other social users. This circumstance provided developmental space for market - oriented social - media platforms such as 'Tianya, Xici Hutong, Mop, Kaidi, and Baidu Tieba. These forum communities were analogous to campus BBS in terms of technology and organizational form, yet they boasted richer topics, more heterogeneous participants, more professional management, more flexible rules, and a larger user scale. Subsequently, they swiftly became the mainstream public platforms of social - networking sites. Given that many network users were university teachers and students, numerous netizens were active in both campus BBS and off - campus forums. This phenomenon facilitated the communication, transition, and dissemination of numerous topics among diverse forum communities. This configuration constituted the overall pattern of the Chinese social - media ecosystem in the Web1.0 era and served as the backdrop for the emergence of the first - generation internet celebrities (Sarfi et al., 2021). The early user base (1997–2004) was dominated by intellectual elites: university/research institution scholars, IT/telecom professionals, and public/private sector

administrators. Notably, student users surged from 16.4% in 1998 to 32.4% in 2004, reflecting higher education's role as an internet incubator. The 2000 advent of broadband, combined with university computerization and urban internet café proliferation, triggered structural shifts: BBS and early social media user bases expanded exponentially, driven by information-seeking, entertainment, and social networking. By this period, users spent over 13 hours weekly online, signaling the internet's transition from an elite tool to a mainstream social infrastructure. This developmental trajectory reveals a two-stage adoption model: first, institutional embedding within knowledge-producing elites, then mass diffusion enabled by technological innovation. The data underscores how technical affordances (broadband) and social contexts (university networks, café culture) co-constructed China's internet user ecology, prefiguring the platform capitalism era that followed.

3.2 The Formation of Online Virtual Communities and the Emergence of the Phenomenon of Becoming Popular Online

With the advent and subsequent ascendance of online virtual communities, the inaugural generation of Chinese internet celebrities materialized. Despite the diverse trajectories through which they attained popularity, discernible commonalities prevail in their group attributes, modalities of achieving fame, and the underlying logical frameworks. The intellectual - elite stratum constituted the core constituency of the first - generation internet celebrities (Lackey, 2021). The spread of the Internet in China began in institutions of higher learning and research facilities. Online virtual communities, characterized by their reliance on interest - centered topics as the connective tissue and text - based interaction as the primary mode of engagement, were congruent with the behavioral proclivities of the intellectual cohort. In the realm of traditional media, discursive power was contingent upon one's status in the real - world social fabric. In contrast, online virtual communities had furnished the intellectual elite with an innovative medium for the propagation of their ideas, thereby precipitating the emergence of the first - generation of online public intellectuals. Simultaneously, these virtual platforms had surmounted the constraints imposed by traditional media for grassroots young intellectuals endowed with the volition and capacity for self - expression, affording them a dedicated space for ideological articulation. Concomitantly, a constellation of vibrant ideological and public - opinion platforms had come into existence, serving as the crucible for the aggregation and maturation of grassroots online opinion leaders. With

respect to the implications for economic and social functions, the influence exerted by the first - generation internet celebrities were preponderantly manifested in the cultural and social echelons. The ideological and public-opinion currents within virtual communities traversed multiple platforms, engendering an online public-opinion landscape distinct from that of mainstream media. In sum, during the epoch of portal websites, the phenomenon of achieving popularity online was characterized by the gradual emergence of cultural and social influence, juxtaposed with relatively tenuous economic linkages (Charlesworth et al., 2022). This early online popularity phenomenon, emblematic of the portal website era, demonstrated the incipient emergence of cultural - social influence, while economic relations remained in a nascent, underdeveloped state, reflecting a dialectical tension between the symbolic power of digital self - representation and the material forces of capital accumulation.

4. THE PHENOMENON OF BECOMING POPULAR ONLINE IN THE WEIBO ERA AND ITS SOCIAL INFLUENCES (2005-2011)

In 2005, two landmark events took place in the development of China's Internet. One was the rise of blogs, which announced China's entry into the Web 2.0 era. The other was that the total number of netizens exceeded 100 million, among which broadband users accounted for half, and the popularization and application of the Internet in China entered an acceleration period. With the changes in the technological environment and the characteristics of the netizen structure, the phenomenon of becoming popular online began to become a social focus of public attention at a phenomenal level.



Figure 2: The Interface of Sina Weibo

4.1 The Media Environment and User Characteristics in the "Micro Era"

In contrast to BBS and forums/communities, the social - media landscape in the blog and Weibo eras underwent several pivotal transformations. A personalized public - media platform came into being. Blogs were highly autonomous and individualized, and social interactions in this context placed substantial emphasis on user attributes. Second, the advent of Weibo engendered an immediate and multi-point - connected milieu. The social - interaction modality had transitioned from being centered on interest - based topics in the BBS era to being centered on individuals in the Weibo era, adopting a point - to - point model. Concurrently, China's netizen demographics underwent remarkable transformations. From 2005 to 2011, the user base surged from 110 million to 510 million, with internet penetration growing at an annual rate of 4.3%—a trajectory that saw China become the world's largest online population by 2008. This growth was marked by a structural shift: while internet adoption among higher-education groups approached saturation, users with secondary education credentials experienced exponential growth. The 10–29 age cohort, predominantly youth and students, constituted the highest usage segment, while middle-class users accounted for over 40% of the total. As Zhang et al. (Zhang et al., 2014) emphasize, this period solidified a tripartite netizen profile: youth-dominated, secondary-educated, and middle-class demographic configuration that prefigured the platform economy's subsequent expansion. This structural shift in netizen demographics, characterized by an emergent tripartite profile, can be seen as a material precondition for the commodification of cultural values, instantiating a dialectical relationship between the expansion of digital capitalism and the reconfiguration of axiological frameworks within virtual social spheres.

4.2 Network Community - based Interactions and the Rise of the Online Public Opinion Field

In the context of the iterative advancement of social - media technologies and the evolution of the netizen demographic, three pivotal structural developments manifested in the trajectory of China's network society. The first was the transformation of network-social paradigms. While the 2005 "Super Girl" phenomenon initiated the nascence of fan culture in China, it was the advent of platforms such as blogs that catalyzed the transformation of fan culture into a quotidian group dynamic. As personalized social platforms, blogs and Weibo forged direct and intimate interactive channels between individuals and their fan bases, thereby

engendering a novel network-social paradigm—network - community - based communication. A fundamental distinction between a network community and a traditional network virtual community lay in its individual-centric social - relational architecture. Unlike the BBS era, where topic-or event-based interactions prevailed, network communities facilitated cross-temporal and cross-spatial social relations through identity construction and group-identification mechanisms, which in turn fostered the stabilization and institutionalization of such relations. Network-community-based existence thus represented a new iteration of social-relational transformation in the digital age, serving as a cornerstone for the emergence of online virality. The second development pertained to the proliferation of network subculture and its multifaceted social ramifications. Network subculture emerged concomitantly with the formation of network communities. Fueled by netizens' active engagement, emulation, and creative ingenuity, network subculture burgeoned, reflecting diverse aspects of real - world livelihoods and garnering widespread acceptance and dissemination. At this stage, network subculture was primarily achieved in the evolution of network-interactive language forms. Notably, the emergence and prevalence of "ironic praise"—the artful, humorous expression of the opposite of one's true sentiment—had been embraced by netizens, spawning a plethora of Internet buzzwords and permeating offline daily discourse. This shift in discourse patterns signaled the deepening incursion of the online realm into real-life contexts. Beyond discourse, network subculture was also propagated through online behavioral patterns and value systems. In particular, the "spoof culture" propelled by Internet celebrities had not only reshaped aesthetic sensibilities in daily leisure but had also exacerbated the prevalence of a utilitarian mindset that legitimized kitsch in the pursuit of rapid fame. The third development was the ascendance of the network public - opinion sphere. During this period, the user bases of diverse social - media platforms, including BBS, forums/communities, QQ, Renren.com, blogs, and Weibo, experienced exponential growth. Network - mediated social interaction has become an increasingly dominant lifestyle. The cross - platform dissemination of social media, combined with its vast user reach, substantially amplified the salience and impact of network public - opinion. These structural developments in China's network society are not mere technological or sociological phenomena but rather manifestations of deeper axiological crises. They reflect the ongoing struggle between the commodifying logic of digital capitalism and the human desire for authentic social relations, meaningful

cultural expression, and democratic participation. A critical understanding of these dynamics is essential for developing ethical frameworks that can navigate the complexities of the digital age without succumbing to value nihilism.

4.3 The Categorical Differentiation, Nature Shift and Consequential Impacts of Becoming Popular Online

Compared with the previous phase, the phenomenon of achieving online fame exhibited a complex state. In terms of continuity, individuals who attained renown on forums through the creation of high - quality content had transitioned to blogs and Weibo. Once their fan base exceeded 500,000, they evolved into prominent online figures, and the term "online public intellectuals" had emerged as a new appellation for opinion leaders in the Weibo era. Celebrity influencers also entered this domain. Traditional film and television stars and social luminaries established their fan communities via blogs or Weibo (for instance, Xu Jinglei, renowned as the "Blog Queen," and Yao Chen, known as the "Weibo Queen"). They accumulated popularity by engaging in active interactions and garnering fan support (Aaker & Smith, 2010). During this stage, a variety of novel paths to online fame emerged. In the Weibo era, the logical mechanism underpinning online fame underwent a fundamental shift. In personalized social media typified by Weibo, achieving online fame no longer solely hinged on content or talent. Instead, it more significantly relied on the attention and interactive support of fans. Cultivating an interactive relationship with fans and establishing a personalized online community were of utmost importance in this period. Even those who attained instant fame through spoofing or unconventional means also paid heed to establishing and maintaining their fan communities and even adapted and transformed themselves in accordance with the preferences of their fan bases (a prime example being Sister Furong's remarkable transformation from vulgarity to refinement after achieving fame). In essence, the social - interaction capacity grounded in the online community represented the primary logic that determined whether one could achieve online fame in the Weibo era and whether one could sustain or augment their fame after achieving it. When online fame became quantifiable, its economic and social implications acquired a realistic foundation for equivalent transformation. Precisely during this period, the economic and social influence of online influencers started to manifest prominently. Firstly, the economic - monetization channels for online influencers became more diverse, and their monetization capabilities were substantially enhanced.

Whether they were celebrities or grassroots online influencers, the economic benefits derived from online fame became increasingly tangible. Secondly, the emergence of online fan communities bestowed attractive commercial value upon the fan count and popularity of online influencers. Consequently, the professionalization of online influencers and the online - marketing model emerged concurrently. An industrial chain for online influencers, encompassing advertising packaging, promotional agencies, and professional training institutions, gradually took shape. Achieving online fame had evolved from solitary individual behavior into a commercial organizational endeavor. Finally, with the expansion of the online user population and the upsurge of online - shopping consumption, online influencers, bolstered by their substantial economic earnings and high social prominence, gradually shed their previously stigmatized social image. The transformation of the social image of online influencers furnished a crucial foundation for the advent of the influencer economy (Naylor et al., 2020). In the cultural phenomenon of internet celebrities, certain values are systematically privileged, marginalized, and commodified, reflecting the underlying power structures of digital capitalism. Cultural Capital in the Digital Sphere plays a crucial role. Initially, in the development of Chinese internet celebrity culture, intellectual elites leveraged their cultural capital, such as profound knowledge and excellent writing skills, to gain influence in online communities. As the internet celebrity economy evolved, new forms of cultural capital emerged. Fashion influencers, for instance, rely on their cultivated aesthetic taste as a form of cultural capital to attract followers and collaborate with brands. Video content creators utilize their entertainment skills, another manifestation of cultural capital, to stand out in the digital crowd. These different forms of cultural capital do not operate in isolation; instead, they interact closely with economic capital (such as brand sponsorships and revenue from content) and social capital (networks of followers, collaborations with other influencers). This interplay contributes to the formation of new value hierarchies in the digital age, where those who can effectively accumulate and convert different types of capital into influence and profit occupy the upper echelons. Symbolic Violence and Digital Inequality are also inherent in this system. Bourdieu's concept of symbolic violence helps us understand the power dynamics at play. The dominant capitalist logic in the internet celebrity economy exerts symbolic violence by privileging values like individualism and materialism while marginalizing others. For example, influencers often face intense pressure to conform to specific aesthetic and behavioral norms dictated by the market. This pressure is not

exerted through overt coercion but rather through the subtle imposition of dominant values, shaping the identities and values of individuals in the process. It creates a form of digital inequality, where those who do not fit the mold set by the dominant culture find it difficult to gain visibility and success, further reinforcing the existing value hierarchies. Privileged values center on individualism, as influencers are celebrated for their self-made success and personal brand, reinforcing the neoliberal myth of meritocracy. Materialism is also exalted, with conspicuous consumption—displayed through luxury goods, lavish lifestyles, and sponsored products—serving as a marker of status and achievement. Visibility itself becomes a core value, as "going viral" and amassing followers are seen as ultimate indicators of worth. Conversely, marginalized values include community and collective action, as the focus on individual stardom overshadows social solidarity and shared goals.

5. THE NETWORKING OF SOCIAL LIFE AND THE RISE OF THE INTERNET CELEBRITY ECONOMY (SINCE 2012)

In 2012, the number of Chinese netizens using mobile phones to access the Internet exceeded that of those using computers for the first time. Especially in rural areas, the popularization and application of the Internet skipped the PC era and directly entered the era of smart phones (Wen, 2017). The leapfrog development of network technology had driven the further iterative upgrading of Chinese social media. WeChat, official accounts, mobile clients, video live - streaming, etc. had become the most popular forms of social interaction at present, and the development of China's network society had entered a more in - depth stage.

5.1 The Changes in the Structure of Chinese Netizens in the Era of Mobile Social Media

Since 2012, a pivotal inflection point manifested in the growth rate of Internet penetration within China. On one hand, the growth paradigm had evolved from the preceding phase of high - velocity expansion to a state of stable progression. Specifically, the growth curve had transitioned from a steep upward trajectory characteristic of the early development stage of the Internet in China to a more gradual and sustainable slope. On the other hand, the remarkable upsurge in the proportion of mobile - enabled Internet access emerged as the primary impetus driving this growth momentum. This shift was indicative of the profound transformation in

the technological infrastructure and user - adoption patterns within the Chinese digital landscape. In 2013, the widespread dissemination of China Mobile's 4G services served as a catalytic factor, further accelerating the rapid augmentation of the share of mobile - network users. As per the data expounded in the 41st Bulletin of the China Internet Network Information Center (CNNIC), by the culmination of 2017, the number of mobile netizens surpassed 750 million, constituting a substantial 97.5% of the total Chinese netizen population. This statistic underscored the preeminence of mobile devices as the dominant mode of Internet access in contemporary China. Concurrent with the proliferation of mobile networks was the exponential proliferation of mobile social media. A salient exemplary was WeChat, which experienced an explosive growth trajectory. Its user base escalated precipitously from 50 million at the end of 2011 to nearly 300 million by the end of 2012 and had since persisted in expanding at an annual rate of 100 - 200 million new users. The advent and rapid diffusion of WeChat further reconfigured the topological structure of China's online social ecology. The client - side applications, APPs, official accounts, and online video live - streaming services rooted in smartphones and the WeChat ecosystem, capitalizing on the advantages of real - time interactivity, immersive on - site presence, and seamless online - offline transitions, had emerged as the preeminent forms of social engagement since 2016. These digital platforms had not only transformed the way individuals communicated and interacted but had also redefined the boundaries between virtual and physical social spaces (Sundar, 2020). Simultaneously, as artificial intelligence (AI) ascended to the echelon of a burgeoning focal area commanding active attention and substantial investment from both the state and the industrial sector, network - technology innovation entered a new epoch of opportunity (Napoli, 2003). The convergence of AI with network technologies held the potential to revolutionize various aspects of the digital realm, from enhancing user experience through personalized content recommendation to optimizing network performance through intelligent traffic management (Preston, 2000). Beyond the technological determinants, the prevalence of network - based social - interaction modalities were intricately intertwined with the significant alterations in the structural composition and behavioral attributes of domestic netizens. The core characteristics of the netizen demographic structure during this phase were manifested in three principal dimensions: a predominantly youthful age profile, a preponderance of individuals with middle - to - low educational attainment and income levels,

and a substantial proportion of students and freelance workers. The composition of China's netizen community reveals a distinct demographic and socioeconomic profile. Young netizens, particularly those aged 20 - 29, dominate, constituting 73% of the 10 - 39 age bracket, a phenomenon attributable to their technological proficiency, adaptability, and inclination towards digital social interaction and self-expression. Middle-to-low educational and income groups form the majority, with 63.3% and 16.2% holding junior high school and primary school educations respectively, and nearly 40% earning 2001 - 5000 yuan monthly, underscoring the widespread penetration of the Internet across various socioeconomic levels. Occupationally, students, making up 25.4%, represent the largest group, followed by self-employed individuals and freelancers at 21.3%, demonstrating the diverse utilization of the Internet for educational, entrepreneurial, and other purposes. In terms of usage duration and behavior patterns, mobile networks have become increasingly enmeshed in the fabric of people's daily lives. The average weekly Internet usage of individuals exhibited a discernible increase, growing from 19.9 hours in 2012 to 27 hours in 2017. Mobile phones had commandeered a substantial portion of people's daily leisure and entertainment time. Notably, among the youth demographic, mobile - phone dependency and addiction had become prevalent phenomena (Qiu et al., 2021). Instant messaging, search engines, entertainment - oriented social networking, and online shopping had emerged as the primary objectives of people's Internet utilization. The utilization rates of WeChat Moments and QQ Space stood at 87.3% and 64.4% respectively. Currently, online live - streaming has garnered the most significant attention, with a user base exceeding 420 million. The proportions of users engaged in game live - streaming and reality - show live - streaming were the highest, each accounting for nearly one - third. This pattern of Internet usage not only reflected the changing entertainment and communication preferences of the Chinese population but also had far - reaching implications for various industries, such as e - commerce, media, and advertising.

5.2 The Networking of Social Life

In contemporary society, the networking of social life has become an irreversible and far-reaching trend, exerting profound impacts on every aspect of human existence. This phenomenon is propelled by the continuous advancement of information and communication technologies, which have effectively knitted together individuals, communities, and

institutions in an intricate digital web.

5.2.1 The Manifestations of Social Life Networking Communication Revolution

The rise of various digital communication tools, such as instant - messaging apps (e.g., WeChat, WhatsApp), has transformed the way people interact. These platforms enable real - time communication across vast geographical distances, breaking the constraints of time and space. Social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Weibo have also expanded the scope of communication. They allow users not only to communicate with their existing social circles but also to connect with like-minded individuals globally. A photography enthusiast in a small town can share their works on Instagram, receive feedback from photographers around the world, and even participate in international photography challenges. Virtual communities have emerged in large numbers, centered around various interests, hobbies, and causes. Reddit, for instance, hosts thousands of sub - communities (subreddits) where people with specific interests, such as astronomy, DIY crafts, or cryptocurrency, can gather (Rokka & Canniford, 2021). These communities provide a space for members to share knowledge, exchange ideas, and support one another. Online gaming communities are another example. In massively multiplayer online games (MMOs) like World of Warcraft, players from different countries cooperate and compete, forming guilds and social hierarchies within the game world. These virtual relationships often spill over into real - life friendships, with players organizing meet - ups and events. E - commerce platforms have become an integral part of daily life. Platforms like Taobao in China and Amazon in the United States offer a vast array of products, from daily necessities to high - end electronics. Consumers can compare prices, read product reviews from other users, and make purchases with just a few clicks. The development of mobile payment systems, such as Alipay and Apple Pay, has further facilitated online transactions, making it possible to complete a purchase within seconds. The sharing economy, which is also a part of digital commerce, has thrived through online platforms. Services like Airbnb for accommodation sharing and Uber for ride - sharing connect providers and consumers directly. A homeowner can rent out their spare room on Airbnb to travelers from all over the world, and a driver can offer rides through Uber during their free time. While these digital platforms undeniably foster connectivity, knowledge sharing, and economic innovation, they simultaneously reinforce the axiological distortions of the internet celebrity economy by commodifying human

relationships, experiences, and identities. and the sharing economy, while touted as a democratic economic model, ultimately subordinates human interactions to the logic of profit maximization, echoing Adorno's critique of the culture industry's instrumentalization of social life.

5.2.2 Remote Work and Online Learning

The advent of high - speed Internet and collaboration tools has made remote work a viable option for many. Companies are increasingly adopting remote work models, allowing employees to work from home or any location with an Internet connection. Tools like Slack for team communication, Trello for project management, and Google Docs for collaborative document editing enable seamless cooperation among remote teams. In the field of education, online learning platforms have proliferated. Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) on platforms like Coursera and edX offer courses from top universities around the world. Students can learn at their own pace, access lecture materials at any time, and interact with instructors and fellow students through online discussion forums. The rise of remote work and online learning, facilitated by high - speed Internet and digital tools, both exemplify and contribute to the axiological transformations seen on the internet - driven landscape. Online learning platforms, while ostensibly democratizing education, can commodify knowledge into consumable products, privileging market - driven educational trends over the pursuit of intellectual depth and critical thinking.

5.3 The Rise of the Internet Celebrity Economy Model and Its Impacts

The widespread adoption of mobile Internet and the extensive use of social media platforms have significantly accelerated the speed of information dissemination. The advancement of communication technologies such as 4G and 5G has provided technical support for emerging communication methods like short videos and live broadcasts. The high - speed data transmission enabled by these technologies allows mobile phones to receive signals from all over the world in real - time, and a large amount of data can be transmitted quickly and completely. People can watch high - definition, colorful, and dynamic videos. At the same time, big data and cloud computing have enabled precise targeting of customer groups and personalized content delivery. This has broken through the simple online - interaction model, and the O2O offline model and closed - loop ecosystem have gradually taken shape. In the realm of digital

communication, the acceleration of information dissemination and the personalization of content delivery privilege the values of efficiency and immediacy, at the expense of contemplation and depth. As Adorno warned, the culture industry's standardization of experience seeps into digital communication, marginalizing diverse cultural expressions and replacing genuine dialogue with algorithm - optimized engagement.

5.3.1 The Transformation of Consumption Concepts

In an era of increasingly abundant material life, consumers' demands for personalized and high - quality goods and services are constantly growing. Internet celebrities, relying on their unique personal charm and content - creation abilities, can effectively attract the attention of specific consumer groups. They often recommend products or services that meet the personalized needs of their followers, which caters to the changing consumption concepts of consumers.

5.3.2 The Impacts of the Internet Celebrity Economy Model

The Internet-celebrity economy has spurred the development of various related industries, including e - commerce, advertising, logistics, and content production. Internet celebrities' promotion of products has directly increased the sales volume of e-commerce platforms. Brands are willing to invest a large amount of marketing funds in collaborating with Internet celebrities, which has promoted the development of the advertising industry. Moreover, the growth in product sales has also led to an increase in logistics demand, driving the development of the logistics industry. In addition, the production of high-quality content by Internet celebrities requires professional teams and resources, which has also promoted the development of the content production industry. The Internet - celebrity economy has given rise to new business models. For example, some Internet celebrities have established their own independent brands, leveraging their influence to promote brand building and product sales. They combine their personal brand image with product features to create unique brand value. In addition, the combination of live - streaming sales and e - commerce has created a new sales model that allows consumers to have a more intuitive and immersive shopping experience (Abidin, 2018).

5.3.3 Challenges in Social Values

The rise of the Internet - Celebrity economy has brought about changes

in the business - economic model. However, it has also presented potential risks for individuals and society. In the era of mobile rich media, the ways for individuals to gain popularity have become increasingly diverse. The conversion of popularity into financial gain and the pursuit of fame and fortune have become more direct and explicit. As a result, the aspiration to become an Internet Celebrity has captured the utilitarian mindset of many grassroots youths longing for overnight success. Consequently, various popularity-seeking platforms with strange and low-quality content, such as currently popular live-streaming show platforms, have emerged.

"Capital - engineered influences embody Adorno's 'culture industry' critique: standardized content prioritizes exchange value over use value, eroding the Kantian 'end-in-itself' ethics of creation. This instrumentalization mirrors Habermas' concern over 'communicative rationality' being supplanted by profit-driven 'strategic behavior'."

6. CONCLUSION

Unlike the two perspectives of technological determinism or social constructionism employed in existing research, this paper adopts the vantage point of the theory of the mutual constitution between technology and society. It accentuates the need to deliberate on the empirical traits, causal mechanisms of the online-popularity phenomenon, along with the economic and social outcomes it engenders. This is achieved by examining the process of mutual constitution and generation between social media and the user subjects. This research framework gains philosophical depth when contextualized within the dialectic of digital capitalism and cultural identity. The bifurcation between appearance-based sensationalism and content-driven value creation mirrors Adorno's critique of the culture industry, where the "exchange value" of digital visibility supplants "use value"—transforming human expression into quantifiable commodities (Adorno & Horkheimer, 2019). This dynamic is particularly acute in China, where the 40% middle - class user base (Zhang et al., 2014) navigates a precarious terrain of status anxiety: appearance - focused influencers exploit societal pressures around, while skill - based creators grapple with the instrumentalization of knowledge under algorithmic metrics. Culturally, this technological - social dynamic disrupts Confucian ethics of self-cultivation. The rise of capital-driven influencer manufacturing (Zhang et al., 2015) embodies a shift from inner sageliness, outer kingship to "outer visibility, inner emptiness" "as seen in cases where brands pay to engineer

"grassroots authenticity." This mirrors Liang Qichao's critique of late Qing "ethical relativism," where market logic dissolves traditional value hierarchies. Yet paradoxically, the "content-value" pole harbors emancipatory potential: Bilibili creators reinterpreting Confucian classics for Gen Z demonstrate how digital spaces can renew cultural traditions through techno-traditional hybridity, challenging both cultural pessimism and technological determinism. In a Confucian-cultural context, the internet celebrity economy predominantly fosters value nihilism rather than value pluralism. In Confucian contexts, the influencer economy instantiates a 'value colonialism' (Naylor et al., 2020), where global capitalist metrics (likes, conversions) supplant 'inner sageliness' with 'outer visibility'. This not only marginalizes virtues like 'li' (ritual propriety) but fosters a nihilistic pluralism—nominal diversity conceals a homogenizing logic, as seen in the commodification of 'filial piety' content for traffic. True value pluralism respects the coexistence of multiple incommensurables yet equally valid value systems. Instead, the internet celebrity economy marginalizes non-market-friendly values, such as deep intellectual pursuits and community-based ethics, leading to a situation where values are increasingly defined by market forces, a form of value nihilism where the essence of value is eroded and replaced by the logic of profit and popularity. This digital terrain also presents opportunities for counterhegemonic practices. Platforms facilitating Habermas's communicative rationality and the revitalization of cultural heritage through techno-traditional syncretism demonstrate the potential for digital spaces to transcend capitalist instrumentalism. China's unique position at the intersection of global technological modernity and millennia-old cultural traditions underscores the universal struggle to reconcile the imperatives of technological progress with humanistic values. This tension mirrors Heidegger's 'question concerning technology'—whether the influencer economy's 'enflaming' (Ge-stell) of human experience as data reduces 'being' to instrumental value. Resolving this requires reconstructing Confucian *'Doctrine of the Mean'* for the digital age, balancing technological innovation with ethical self-cultivation." Resolving this dialectical tension necessitates a paradigmatic shift in our philosophical understanding of techno society, one that navigates the fine line between embracing digital innovation and preserving the incommensurable value of human experience. This requires critical engagement with the ontological implications of digital technology, urging scholars and practitioners alike to reevaluate the foundations of meaning-making, identity formation, and ethical practice in the algorithmic age.

References

- Aaker, J., & Smith, A. (2010). *The dragonfly effect: Quick, effective, and powerful ways to use social media to drive social change*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Abidin, C. (2018). What is an internet celebrity anyway? In *Internet celebrity: Understanding fame online* (pp. 1-18). Emerald Publishing Limited.
- Adorno, T. W., & Horkheimer, M. (2019). The culture industry: Enlightenment as mass deception. In *Philosophers on film from Bergson to Badiou: A critical reader* (pp. 80-96). Columbia University Press.
- Barley, S. R. (1986). Technology as an occasion for structuring: Evidence from observations of CT scanners and the social order of radiology departments. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 78-108.
- Castells, M. (2004). The network society: a cross-cultural perspective. *Edward El*.
- Charlesworth, T. E., Caliskan, A., & Banaji, M. R. (2022). Historical representations of social groups across 200 years of word embeddings from Google Books. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 119(28), e2121798119.
- Habermas, J. (1985). *The theory of communicative action: Volume 1: Reason and the rationalization of society* (Vol. 1). Beacon press.
- Imad, A. R., Elbuzidi, K. J. S., & Chan, T.-J. (2021). Crisis management and communication approach: A case of Boeing 737 MAX. *Journal of Arts & Social Sciences*, 4(2), 7-14.
- Lackey, J. (2021). *The epistemology of groups*. Oxford University Press.
- Ling, R. (2004). *The mobile connection: The cell phone's impact on society*. Elsevier.
- MacKenzie, D., & Wajcman, J. (1999). *The social shaping of technology*. Open University.
- Mansell, R., & Silverstone, R. (1996). Communication by Design: The Politics of Communication and Information Technologies. In: Oxford University Press, Inc.
- Napoli, P. M. (2003). *Audience economics: Media institutions and the audience marketplace*. Columbia University Press.
- Naylor, R. W., Lamberton, C. P., & West, P. M. (2020). The Impact of Social Influence on the Internet: A Review and Agenda for Future Research. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 30(1), 133-152.
- Ni, S. (2024). The new consumption in the internet celebrity economy - The new shopping trend shaped by social media. *Market Weekly*, 37(07), 97 - 100.
- Ogburn, W. F., & Duncan, O. D. (1964). *On culture and social change: Selected papers* (Vol. 171). University of Chicago Press Chicago.
- Peng, L. (2004). Six Developments of Chinese Online News. *Journal of Hangzhou Normal University (Social Sciences Edition)*, 05, 14 - 20.
- Peng, L., & Su, T. (2024). The emerging problem domain: New topics in the intelligent era and the new implications of old issues - A review of new media research in 2023. *Journal of International Communication*, 46(01), 49 - 68.
- Preston, P. (2000). Reshaping communications: Technology, information and social change.
- Qiu, W., Wang, Y., Song, L., & Zhang, Y. (2021). Enhance High School Students' Grit by Parental Rearing Style: a Moderated Mediation Model and the Accurate Recommendation System. 2021 2nd International Conference on Information Science and Education (ICISE-IE),

- Rainie, H., & Wellman, B. (2012). *Networked: The new social operating system* (Vol. 10). Mit Press Cambridge, MA.
- Rokka, J., & Canniford, R. (2021). Brand Community, Co-Creation, and Social Media: A Critical Perspective. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 37(7-8), 745-763.
- Sarfi, T., Nosrati, S., & Sabzali, M. (2021). The new celebrity economy in cyberspace. *Journal of Cyberspace Studies*, 5(2), 203-228.
- Su, J., Watchravesringkan, K., Zhou, J., & Gil, M. (2019). Sustainable clothing: Perspectives from US and Chinese young Millennials. *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, 47(11), 1141-1162.
- Sundar, S. S. (2020). Rise of machine agency: A framework for studying the psychology of human-AI interaction (HAII). *Journal of computer-mediated communication*, 25(1), 74-88.
- Taylor, C. (1989). *Sources of the self: The making of the modern identity*. Harvard University Press.
- Van Dijck, J., Poell, T., & De Waal, M. (2018). *The platform society: Public values in a connective world*. Oxford university press.
- Vargo, S. L., & Lusch, R. F. (2014). Evolving to a new dominant logic for marketing. In *The service-dominant logic of marketing* (pp. 3-28). Routledge.
- Wang, W. B. (2016). Generation Logic, Ethical Reflection and Normative Guidance of the Internet Celebrity Economy. *Seeking Truth*, 08, 43 - 49.
- Wen, J. L. (2017). Analysis of Video Characteristics in the New Media Era. *Modern Television Technology*, 04, 137 - 139.
- Williams, R. (2003). *Television: Technology and Cultural Form*. Psychology Press.
- Zhang, J., Shabbir, R., Pitsaphol, C., & Hassan, W. (2015). Creating brand equity by leveraging value creation and consumer commitment in online brand communities: A conceptual framework. *International Journal of Business and Management*, 10(1), 80.
- Zhang, Y., Sun, X. L., & Zhu, Q. H. (2014). Research on the Characteristics and Laws of Public Opinion Dissemination in Sudden Public Events - Taking Sina Weibo and Sina News Platform as Examples. *Journal of Intelligence*, 33(04), 90 - 95.